

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the Examiner's comments in the Office Action mailed May 15, 2006 and thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 18, 19, and 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In this Amendment, the features of claim 18, and intervening claim 17, have been incorporated into the base claim 16. The features of claim 29 have been incorporated into the base claim 23. Claims 17, 18, 24-26, and 29 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims.

Claim Rejections

Claims 16, 17, 23, 24, 26, and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,227,717 to Ott et al (hereinafter "Ott"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to expedite prosecution of this case, Applicants have amended claim 16 to incorporate the features of canceled claims 17 and 18. Claim 18 was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Applicants, therefore, respectfully assert pending claim 16 overcomes the rejection for at least the same reasons as claim 18. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 16 is respectfully requested.

Claims 17, 24, and 26 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection with respect to these claims moot. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to pursue claims 17, 24, and 26 in a later filed continuation application.

Claim 23 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 29. Claim 29 was indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Applicants, therefore, respectfully assert pending claim 23 overcomes the rejection for at least the same reasons as claim 29. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 23 is respectfully requested.

Claim 28 depends from claim 23 and is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 23. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 28.

Claims 25 and 27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ott applied to claims 23 and 24 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,557,505 to Schaefer et al. (hereinafter "Schaefer"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants have canceled claim 25 without prejudice of disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection moot with respect to claim 25 moot. However, Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to pursue claim 25 in a later filed continuation application.

Claim 27 depends from claim 23 and is allowable over Ott for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 23. Schaefer does not overcome the shortcomings of Ott. Schaefer does not disclose or suggest a fiber optic connector assembly including a fiber optic connector; a plug configured to be mounted over the ferrule of the fiber optic connector; and a cover for holding the plug to the connector, wherein the plug includes an inner ledge adjacent an insertion end of the plug, the inner ledge configured to deform to fit about and engage the ferrule. For at least these reasons, Ott would not lead a person having skill in the art to the invention of claim 27, even in view of Schaefer. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 27 is respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.



Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven C. Bruess". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Steven C. Bruess
Reg. No. 34,130

Date: August 15, 2006

SCB/JKS:bog